

Rosemary Boorman - March 2014



Hello fellow garden club members. I am 63 years old, widowed in recent years and have two sons, Damon 39 years old who lives with his wife in Chattillon, Burgandy France, they are expecting their first child at the end of March. He has been working in Darwin for an oil rig company on a contract and went back to Europe at the end of February.

My second son James who lives in Adelaide with his wife and their 18 month son, is a graphic designer (animated graphics) currently working for the ABC after years of working in private enterprise - he is 35 years old.

I have worked as a personal carer in nursing homes for 20 years but I'm now a support worker in disabilities in the community.

My inspiration for gardening evolved mainly from my mother in law who was a keen gardener, the many open gardens visited in the 15 years I lived in Pt. Lincoln, visiting places such as the Botanic Gardens in Adelaide and at Mt Lofty and my husband and I working on 'blank canvases', having built three houses in our time, also from friends' gardens, the sharing of ideas and the exchange of plants and cuttings.

I remember as a young child watching my father reap the rewards of vegetables grown in our backyard in the northern suburbs in Adelaide, especially the broads beans which were cooked and served with a white sauce which did not appeal. Different now!

In my late teens I met my husband Peter and we married a few years later. He was in the Police Force and most of our time was spent moving from one country posting to another.

Our first was to Pt Pirie, housing was always provided and the garden there consisted of buffalo lawns and hardy plants.

Being newly weds we were more interested in our work and social life but I do recall planting two fast growing eucalypts on the front fence line to provide shade in summer, not to benefit us but for future occupants - that was more than 40 years ago.

Five years later Peter was posted to Mt Barker Police Station where once again housing was provided, a brand new one this time and we were expected to do the landscaping ourselves.

It was a flat block so fairly simple, we planted a four grass lawn, two of which I remember were Kentucky Blue, and Chewings Fescue.

I planted Eucalypts again on the front footpath border, one of which is now enormous and the other a beautiful flowering red gum, perhaps a wiser choice would have been two red gums. Magnificent in Flower.

We decided to build our first home, it was now or never.

We bought a quarter acre block in Mt Barker which incidentally had a population of just over 3,000 in the mid seventies - very different to what it is today.

The land was sloping so proved quite a challenge to develop - as the soil consisted of mainly clay, we decided on a native theme and my in-laws cuttings to fill in gaps.

The beds surrounded a lawn in the centre, curved with edging of red brick on a mortar foundation.

While I was busy planting, my husband built Wistow slate and mortar retaining walls with the red brick capping in the back yard, incorporating a brick barbecue with a chimney pot into one of them, very elaborate landscaping - he'd gone to a lot of trouble.

I planted a silky oak, a lemon scented gum and a blue gum which grew so fast, they uprooted one particularly wet winter two years later.

I had a lovely large bed of red gauntlet strawberries which we made good use of and so did the black-birds.

After seven years living on Kavanagh Street, Peter yearned for an outback posting, by this time he had his promotion to 3rd grade sergeant and had spent 18 months working in the city watch-house on shifts.

Before too long we were living in Ceduna, right on the foreshore, a great lifestyle for our two boys - we spent three years fishing and camping, with involvement in school and town activities as well as work.

Can't say I took much interest in the garden while there, but I did have a lovely vegetable patch and kept the rest tidy - after Ceduna we spent five years back in Pt Pirie where I started work in a nursing home, just weekends in those days.

Five years later we moved to Pt Lincoln where we stayed for 15 years, absolutely loving it.

Eventually we built another home on a 1600 square metre block on the outskirts of town, with granite boulders at the back, too big to remove so we incorporated them into the landscape design - they made an interesting feature.

There we planted kikuya lawn, added curved borders once again and little garden 'rooms' - we planted a Robina psuedo acacia, with its lime green foliage it created a lovely contrast to other greens.

Lots of roses! A feature being a Sea Foam weeping standard and others including Cecile Brunner over an arch, a climber Crepuscle near the back verandah, Mr Lincoln and Double Delight bush roses to name a few, plus lots of fruit trees and a good sized vegetable patch...

After 15 years at Pt Lincoln we moved closer to Adelaide - Strathalbyn - when I down-size, I've decided that my next garden will be a Mediterranean one.

Strath Craft Fair May 3 and 4
Strathalbyn Town Hall from 10am daily